

Case 2746

***Anas arcuata* Horsfield, 1824 (currently *Dendrocygna arcuata*; Aves, Anseriformes): proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of *Dendrocygna arcuata* (Horsfield, 1824), which is currently in use for the wandering tree duck of Indonesia, other East Indies islands and northern Australia. The name was first proposed as a replacement for *D. javanica* (Horsfield, 1821), the valid name for the Indian tree duck.

1. Horsfield (1821, p. 199) described *Anas javanica* from Java. He was aware that his material included two different forms and he described the second separately, as 'var. B', although he considered the two forms to be one species.

2. Later Horsfield (1824, p. [294], pl. [65]) gave a more extensive description and a coloured plate of what he believed to be the same species, under the name *Anas arcuata*. The new name was proposed to replace *A. javanica*. Horsfield's *Zoological researches in Java* was published, unpaginated and with unnumbered plates, in eight parts. Only the plates were dated, 1821–1824 (see Horsfield, 1824, pp. [xi]–[xii] for the composition of each part; Richmond, 1919, p. 475 and Sherborn, 1922, p. lxxix for the dates of publication). Plate [65], on which the illustration of *A. arcuata* appeared, bore the date 'April 1824'. Horsfield's work included a section (pp. [iii]–[x]) 'General catalogue of Javanese birds, arranged in the museum of the Honourable East India Company'. The catalogue was printed in two columns; the first column showed the names used in Horsfield's 1821 paper, and Horsfield noted (p. [iii]): 'The second column exhibits the changes which have been occasioned since this period, by the rejection of *topical* names, by the introduction of several names employed in the *Nouveau Recueil de Planches coloriées d'Oiseaux*, published by M.M. Temminck and Laugier, and by other necessary alterations in Nomenclature'. *Anas arcuata* appeared (p. [x]) in the second column, opposite the 1821 name *A. javanica*. When describing the species Horsfield (p. [294]) adopted the name *arcuata* and *javanica* appeared as a synonym. Horsfield commented: 'For the name of *Anas javanica*, originally applied to it, I have substituted the name by which, according to the information communicated to me by M. Temminck, it is distinguished by M. Cuvier, in the Museum of Paris, in the specimens presented by M. Leschenault'.

An application for the conservation of *Anas arcuata* Horsfield, 1824 was submitted by Dr G.F. Mees (*Nationaal Natuurhistorisch Museum, Leiden, The Netherlands*) on 13 November 1989. In 1991 Dr Mees wrote to say that, following his retirement, he no longer wished to pursue the case and it has therefore not been put forward in his name.

3. Blyth (1865, pp. 38–39) was the first to point out that Horsfield's 1821 material was composite, and that the bird described and illustrated in 1824 was the 'var. B' of the earlier publication, and a different species. Since well before the end of the 19th century it became generally accepted that Horsfield had, inadvertently, described two different species.

4. Mathews (1911, p. 9) noted that *Anas arcuata*, as published by Horsfield (1824), was a synonym of *A. javanica*. He suggested use of the name *Dendrocygna gouldi* Gould, 1865 (p. 374) for the species called *arcuata*, and rejected the earlier names *Anas badia* Müller, [1842] (p. 159, a nomen nudum) and *Dendrocygna vagans* Fraser, 1846 (pl. 68 and text, described from the Philippines and therefore not acceptable to Mathews for an Australian bird). Oberholser (1921, p. 166) also commented that *arcuata*, being a substitute name for *javanica*, was an objective synonym of the latter and could not be used for a different species; he proposed the next available name, *D. vagans* Fraser, 1846, for the second species. Phillips (1922, pp. 140, 148), however, adopted both *arcuata* and *javanica* as valid, arguing that the bird described and illustrated by Horsfield in 1824 was a different species from that described in 1821. Riley (1924, p. 33) also used both names, for 'perfectly distinct species'.

5. Following the works of Phillips (1922) and Riley (1924) the duck described and illustrated by Horsfield (1824) has been known by the name *arcuata* and both names, *javanica* and *arcuata*, have been used as valid in the ornithological literature (see, for example, Gooders, 1969, pp. 182–184; Mayr & Cottrell, 1979, pp. 428–429; and Howard & Moore, 1980, p. 69). It would now be undesirable to reject *arcuata* and replacing the name would result in considerable confusion (see Mees, 1989, pp. 368–369).

6. Horsfield did not mention the specimens on which his names were based in either his 1821 or 1824 publications. Warren (1966, p. 146) listed a specimen, no. 1880.1.1.4742, from Horsfield's Javan material in the collections (now at Tring) of the Natural History Museum, London as a syntype of *javanica* Horsfield, 1821, and noted that Salvadori (1895, p. 159) had recorded the specimen as 'Type of the species'. Warren also recorded (1966, p. 19) a specimen, no. 1880.1.1.2436, as an adult syntype of *arcuata* and noted that Salvadori (1895, p. 155) had referred to this as the 'Type of Horsfield's plate, Zool. Res. pl. 65'. Warren (1966, p. iii) noted that 'listing of a syntype as 'the type', as was often done in the *Catalogue of Birds* (BM 1874–1898), does not constitute its designation as lectotype; nor of course does its listing in the present work'. Specimen no. 1880.1.1.4742 mentioned above is here designated as the lectotype of *Anas javanica* Horsfield, 1821. It is desirable that a lectotype also be designated for *A. arcuata* Horsfield, 1824.

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to rule that the specific name *arcuata* Horsfield, 1824, as published in the binomen *Anas arcuata*, is to be treated as the specific name of a then new nominal species;
- (2) to designate specimen no. 1880.1.1.2436 in the Natural History Museum (Tring) as the lectotype of *Anas arcuata* Horsfield, 1824;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *arcuata* Horsfield, 1824, as published in the binomen *Anas arcuata* and as defined by the lectotype designated in (2) above.

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